

Editors' Table.

THE SEASON AND ITS LESSON.

In these green days
 Reviving sickness lifts her languid head,
 Life flows afresh, and young-eyed health exults
 The whole creation round. The forest smiles,
 And every sense and every heart is joy.

THOMSON.

NATURE, in her material forms, has one striking advantage over animated nature. The first can recall her youth, or rather she is always young in some portions of her domain; but living creatures must decay and die, to live no more beneath the sun.

These stated revivals of nature in her youth and beauty are, therefore, to human life—as well as to the animal—seasons of joyful interest and new opportunities of happiness. With the advent of spring come fresh hopes of health and life, and who can feel old or lose sympathy for whatever is lovely, pure, and of good report? And now, when MAY, full-robed in her garniture of living green, with its tassels and fringes, its buttons and buds, and ornamented and crowned with her rainbow-hued flowers—is with us—does not the lesson teach that the All-Wise Creator intended His human children should love the beautiful and be made better and happier by the good gifts of the season? And here an important inference naturally occurs: While nature is thus renovated by Divine power and made beautiful that her best uses may be developed and enjoyed, is it wrong for Christian men and women to use the faculties God has given them to prepare clothing for themselves and their children, in such a way as will make their apparel beautiful as well as comfortable? Is it not rather a duty to make our own personal appearance conform, so far as we are able, with the purity and beauty of nature in her best representations of the innocent enjoyments of life?

Our readers may remember that we gave, in the June number, 1867, as a leading article in our Table, "Fashions and their Influences," ending with the promise to discuss the present modes of feminine attire in some future number. So we will now leave the sober questions on the "Duties of Dress" until next month, and take up the last year's subject.

PRESENT FASHIONS OF DRESS.

"All general considerations on dress must converge towards the feminine costume," says the British philosopher. "Through the feminine toilet fashion transacts its weighty part in the world, and by its ebbs and flows keeps the world at work." And thus, for the last seven years' fashion has been actively busy in our country, changing old modes and boldly innovating in a way that can only be rationally accounted for by admitting that fashion, or the art of dress, has some mysterious connection with thought and intellect so close and intricate as to render it "almost the type of progress." Thus our present fashions of feminine attire are in harmony with the great events that have been hurrying the nation, as if with the swiftness and force of a rushing cataract, on its career, and also stirring the Old World's society to its foundations.

The spirit of the age produces scientific discoveries; lays the ocean telegraph at the proper time; shakes down thrones; opens new paths to the statesman, and enriches the ample pages of history and knowledge with something more than the spoils of

time; and also it changes the style of feminine costume! Why do we see the round hat, the cravat, the *paletot*, the vest? Because men as well as women talk eagerly on the subject of "Women's Rights," sexual equality, and a parity of pursuits among men and women. So, also, we have the pert cavalry cap, the epauletted saks, the Zouave jackets, the military glitter in trimmings, because we have been shaken by a terrible revolution and passed through a war that has stirred the heart and soul of the whole people.

Is there not a pervading influence which makes us now see beauty and grace in dresses that float in billowy clouds over thick ribs of steel—now in narrow skirts that rob woman of half her last year's bulk? Yes, the glass of fashion and the mould of form are, as we believe, as surely governed by what may be styled occult influences, as are any of the grander or more high-sounding circumstances of human life. But though all are more or less under the government of fashion, it is the part of good sense and discretion not to attempt a revolution or individual rebellion against the ruling power, but to conduct its administration wisely and modestly, waiting for that tide in the affairs of the world's progress that will modify the present caprices of costume, and thus show that unwomanly modes of thought have been corrected.

We learn from Paris that the present style of Lilliputian bonnets is to continue; but there are indications that fashion will not allow women to transform themselves into the semblance of men. The quietly trains for the drawing-room, the pretty and modest walking dresses for the street, are indications that the masculine *role* of pursuits is not in harmony with feminine taste and feeling. And thus may it ever be, for

"Woman is not undeveloped man,
 But diverse; could she make her as the man,
 Sweet love were slain, whose dearest bond is this,
 Not like to like, but like in difference."

ENGLISH WOMEN OF THE UPPER CLASSES.

In the April number we gave a synopsis of the masterly address of Mr. Lowe concerning the "Education of the Upper Classes in England." Our readers will recollect that this distinguished scholar and statesman does not, in his idea of public education, include any provision for Englishwomen of any class. While reading Mr. Lowe's strictures on the deficiencies of the University system in England, we were reminded of the remarks of an American woman who visited Oxford some years ago: As she observed the princely manner in which the education of young men had been provided for—that there were accommodations and provisions for training ten times the number who were actually enjoying the privileges of the old University, she exclaimed, "What wealth has been gathered into this city of Oxford to build up these nineteen massive colleges, with their chapels, libraries, and other appurtenances! Had a tenth part of this money been expended to afford judicious training to the mothers of the noble youth of England, would not the colleges, though fewer, have been better filled now—and by more orderly and moral young men than is the fashion to expect in the universities of England?"

Admirable as Mr. Lowe's theories for the improve-

ment of the educated classes (meaning men only) are, it seems to us that he has either failed to grasp the entire subject, or else did not choose to bring it before the public. He has not noticed the importance of woman's education, and its inevitable influence over the education of men. Has he reflected that no public provision has ever been made for the intellectual needs of women? that while millions upon millions of money have been lavished on colleges and institutions for the sons of the British Empire, not a single seminary has been endowed and permanently established for the daughters? What would Englishmen have done to advance science, art, learning, and religion, had their mental improvement been as little cared for by the State as that of their sisters has been?

The unsoundness which Mr. Lowe attacks consists in the important omission of the moral and practical elements of education; these are precisely what would have been supplied had the statesmen and scholars who established places of learning for their own sons considered at the same time what would be needed in the culture of woman; if, in addition to her home training, a wider range of study, and an opportunity for developing her intellect had been afforded her, who does not perceive the great advantages that must have resulted to the sons of such mothers? and how much better they would have been prepared for improvement in their college studies, and for a nobler career in life? Woman is, by the appointment of God, the first teacher; her influence is paramount over boys as well as girls. She is the conservator of religion and virtue, and while raising the moral tone of home and of society, why should she be deprived of the culture which would fit her to elevate intellectually as well as morally, the character of those within the sphere of her influence?

We do not by any means assert that Englishwomen have not, in spite of their disadvantages, asserted themselves intellectually. The home training of the higher classes is systematically directed to fit each for her station in life. This often gives them more knowledge of the practical, and places them more in harmony with the duties of life, than does the college education of their brothers. And yet, had these young women been allowed the higher advantages of the intellectual training of the masculine mind, we cannot doubt that it would have resulted in a higher tone of national morality and a nobler development of national character. Notwithstanding these soul-depressing disadvantages, feminine genius has added many a wreath to the fame of England, and contributed a large share to the moral enlightenment of the public mind.

It is characteristic of feminine talent that its exercise, with very rare exceptions, has been promotive of goodness, purity, and happiness. Woman has seldom written from the promptings of ambition, to display her learning, to establish a theory, or to mortify a rival. Nor has she written for pecuniary gain, from party excitement or the love of science. Household affection and humble devotion have been her chief inspirers; these, with sympathy, gratitude, philanthropy, and patriotism have been sufficient motives. Perhaps her little flower of feeling or of fancy may contain a healing virtue more efficacious to society than the fruits gathered from the loftiest speculations of men's philosophy can afford. Thus she reasons, and she is right. Count the number of writers during the last sixty years (since when only the diffusion of knowledge among the people has been attempted), and how many of these whose writings have contributed to the enjoyment and improvement of the young, to domestic comfort, to the

promotion of benevolence, and of humble piety, have been women. Many of them have gone to their reward in that world of life where there is no distinction of sex, but all the good are as the angels in heaven.

In applying what we have said to our own country and to American women, there is one cheering comparison to be made. In the population of Great Britain are perhaps eleven millions of girls and women above the age of fourteen. Of these certainly not more than three millions can have been what is termed educated. Of the remainder, a very large proportion cannot read or write; nay, they cannot understand anything in the least complex or out of their daily experience. It is upon these, the workmen and laborers' wives, that the burden of ignorance weighs most heavily; a burden that must be lifted from their minds before the whole nation can become civilized. And all talk of a higher education must with them be postponed to the simplest rudiments of knowledge. From this our public schools and the higher wages of our laborers have saved us. The foundations have been laid throughout our people for a thorough collegiate education for girls. It will be our own fault if the superstructure long remains wanting.

LOSSES AND CROSSES.

BY LILLIAN.

I.

LOSSES

May be crosses!
 Loss of friends who love us
 With a love we fondly prize;
 Loss of light above us
 Shining from the clear blue skies;
 Loss of rarest treasures,
 Costing weary toil to gain;
 Loss of sweetest pleasures,
 Leaving voids for life-long pain!
 All such losses
 May be crosses
 Hard for us to bear,
 Till along the tangled path of care
 Crowns of thorns we seem to wear;
 And we long for rest
 When to God it seemeth best!

II.

CROSSES

Are not losses,
 In the highways standing,
 Or the humbler walks of life,
 All our powers demanding,
 Or a weaker arm for strife!
 Unto golden treasures
 May they brighten in our hands,
 Crown with saintly pleasures
 In the sunny Eden lands!
 Soarest crosses
 Are not losses
 With God's strength to bear!
 Though they crowd the tangled paths of care,
 Tints of glory they shall wear,
 Giving sweeter rest
 When to God it seemeth best!

THE ROYAL AUTHORESS.

A SECOND work from the Queen of Great Britain has won more favor than even her "Memoirs of the Prince Consort." No doubt our readers know the title of the queen's book, "Our Life in the Highlands;" but if they have not read it, they have a new pleasure to enjoy. Its popularity in England is unprecedented; the sales had reached 150,000 copies some time ago, and the demand continued. The last *Edinburgh Review* clearly defines its characteristics, and these give the work a charm beyond the reach of art. The QUEEN is lost in the woman, and royalty of soul rather than that of rank is apparent